

Frequently Asked Questions by Site Administrators and Teachers

General Teacher Licensure Unit (TLU) Information

What is the TLU?

The Teacher Licensure Unit (TLU) is located in the Office of School Readiness (OSR), NC Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI). The TLU was established in January of 2007 to facilitate the Birth-through-Kindergarten (B-K) Licensure process for More at Four (MAF) teachers working in nonpublic schools (licensed private child care and Head Start programs). The TLU makes it possible for MAF teachers in nonpublic schools to attain and maintain a B-K Standard Professional II License (B-K SP II) as required for teachers in public schools.

Who should enroll with the TLU?

Any MAF teacher currently working in a nonpublic school setting who holds a BA/BS degree or higher from a **regionally accredited institution** should enroll with the TLU. For specific information and forms visit www.osr.nc.gov, then click on the **Teacher Education and Licensure** link where information, instructions and forms can be found.

When should teachers enroll with the TLU?

Lead More at Four teachers in nonpublic schools should enroll if one of the following criteria is met:

- **B-K Standard Professional II (SP II) License:** Teachers are required to maintain licensure status through participation in professional development (ongoing), teacher evaluations (twice annually; three in the fifth year of the 5-year renewal cycle), and development of a Professional Growth Plan-PGP (annually). A TLU evaluator will be assigned.
- **B-K Standard Professional I (SP I) License:** Teachers are required to attain a B-K SP II License within three years through the Beginning Teacher Support Program (BTSP). All initially licensed teachers (SP I) must participate in this three-year process, which includes the assignment of a TLU mentor, evaluator, participation in professional development (ongoing), teacher evaluations (four times annually), and development of an Professional Growth Plan (annually).
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- **BA/BS Degree in Early Childhood Education, Child Development, Human Development/Family Studies or Psychology or an unrelated field:** As soon teachers are employed as a lead MAF teacher they should enroll with the TLU.
- **Less than a BA/BS degree:** If teachers are working toward a B-K degree/license, they should enroll after BA/BS degree completion and/or have B-K SP I License.

Resources are limited, so not everyone with a BA/BS degree is eligible to be served by the TLU. The TLU staff will determine whether or not teachers are eligible. If teachers are not eligible at the time of enrollment, the TLU staff will inform them of what requirements are needed to become eligible.

Why do teachers need to enroll with the TLU if they already have a B-K License?

North Carolina accredited colleges/university teacher education programs are authorized to request an initial or Standard Professional I (SP I) License for teachers completing licensure requirements. Following successful completion of all teacher education requirements, the university/college will recommend teacher candidates for an initial license (B-K SP I). MAF requires teachers to have a B-K SP II License. The process for attaining the Standard Professional II (SP II) License is managed by the local education agency (LEA) for public school teachers and the OSR/TLU for MAF teachers in nonpublic schools. All teachers, regardless of their licensure level, are required to enroll and complete the requirements for a continuing (SP II) license.

Teachers with a Standard Professional II License should enroll with the TLU to begin the renewal process.

Is it true that once teachers are enrolled they have a limited amount of time to finish the B-K coursework? Should teachers still enroll if they have many courses left to complete?

It depends. The enrollment form does not start a time clock on completing coursework or even obligate teachers to use the TLU. Your enrollment informs the TLU staff where teachers are geographically and helps with assigning mentors and evaluators. The time clock does begin once teachers are enrolled in the TLU, have the Lateral Entry, SP I or SP II license and are assigned a mentor and evaluator.

How do teachers enroll with the TLU?

Download and complete the **Enrollment Form**, from the OSR website: www.osr.nc.gov. Click on *Teacher Education and Licensure*, then click on *Information for Teachers*. You will find the *Enrollment Form* on this page along with other helpful information.

Please be sure that the *Enrollment Form* is filled out completely and includes an email address. **Please mail the *Enrollment Form* by certified mail.** Keep a copy for personal files. All communication from the TLU is through email.

After teachers enroll, what should happen next?

After the enrollment form is submitted, the TLU staff will invite the enrolled teacher, site administrator, and MAF contractor to attend a mandatory Orientation Session. During this session the participants will learn more about the programs offered by the TLU and the licensure process.

What services are provided by the TLU?

The three services provided by the TLU are:

Lateral Entry Teacher Program (LETP) - serves teachers with a BA/BS degree in Early Childhood Education, Child Development or related field (human development/family studies and psychology) with an overall GPA of at least 2.5, **or** a BA/BS degree in a nonrelated field with at least 24 semester hours of coursework in CD/ECE and an overall GPA of at least 2.5.

Beginning Teacher Support Program (BTSP) - serves teachers with an initial license: Initial Lateral Entry Provisional B-K and B-K Standard Professional I licenses.

License Renewal - serves teachers with a B-K Standard Professional II, Pre-K/K or Preschool Add-On licenses.

After teachers enroll with the TLU, how long will it be before they can enter the BTSP or the LETP?

Due to limited resources (qualified mentors and evaluators, funding) not everyone can be served immediately. Services will be provided based on the following priority levels:

PRIORITY LEVELS FOR TLU SERVICES

Level I: MAF teachers who hold a (a) Birth-through-Kindergarten License (Standard Professional I or II license), Pre-school Add-on or Pre-K/K license, or a (b) Lateral Entry License (issued by the TLU 2007-08), or (c) No license: teacher has a Licensure Only Plan from an accredited teacher education program with all BK coursework successfully completed will be served first.

Level II: MAF teachers who hold a (a) Lateral Entry License with an incomplete Plan of Study, or (b) have been issued a Licensure Only Plan by a teacher education program but have **not** completed all BK course work will be considered next.

Level III: MAF Teachers who hold a BA/BS degree in child development, early childhood education, psychology, or human development/family studies, with an overall 2.5 GPA may be eligible for a Lateral Entry License but have **not** enrolled in accredited teacher education program to complete the BK course work.

Level IV: MAF teachers who hold a non-related BA/BS degree will be considered after teachers from Levels II and III are served. Teachers may move up to the next level by enrolling and successfully completing BK course work through an accredited teacher education program.

Do any TLU programs require teachers to take the Praxis I or Praxis II?

Praxis tests are not a requirement for the TLU or for MAF teachers who plan to teach pre-kindergarten in a private setting. If a teacher works for a public school, he/she will be required to complete a test to become highly-qualified to teach kindergarten (not pre-kindergarten), as required by the Federal Law – No Child Left Behind. It is best to consult with a BK academic advisor about the entry and completion requirements for the B-K teacher education/licensure program. **A list of accredited BK teacher education programs may be found at www.osr.nc.gov** . Click on *Teacher Education and Licensure*, then click on *Information for Teachers*.

How can teachers qualify for a Lateral Entry License with less than a 2.5 GPA?

Teacher applicants with less than the required 2.5 GPA may qualify for lateral entry if they meet the following criteria:

- ◆ Obtain a minimum score of 522 for the PRAXIS I Tests (this is a combined score).

And one of the following:

- ◆ Produce official transcripts documenting completion of 15 semester hours of courses within the last five years with a minimum of a 3.0 GPA., or
- ◆ Complete five years of relevant teaching experience (preschool, ages 3-5 years of age) that occurred after the BA/BS degree was granted.

Is there a cost for the TLU services?

No. There is no cost for TLU services; however, teachers are responsible for licensing fees which will include initial processing, and additional fees each time there are changes requested to that license (renewal, add experience credit, name change, etc.).

If teachers participate in the programs offered by the TLU are they obligated to stay with the current employer or with the MAF program?

There is no formal requirement for a teacher to remain with his/her current employer. Teachers are expected to remain in their current classroom through the Beginning Teacher Support Program for three

years, unless there are extenuating circumstances for continued employment. If teachers exit More at Four altogether they will not be served by the TLU to complete the licensure process. If teachers are employed by a public school their work with the TLU may be accepted in that system, but the TLU mentoring and evaluation services will not transfer.

Since the NC State Board of Education (SBE) has adopted a new teacher evaluation system will the TLU continue to use the PKKTPAI (Prekindergarten-Kindergarten Teacher Performance Appraisal Instrument)?

The NC Office of School Readiness, Teacher Licensure Unit will continue to use the *Prekindergarten-Kindergarten Teacher Appraisal Instrument (PKKTPAI)* through 2009-2010. The NC State Board of Education is requiring all local education agencies (including OSR/TLU) to begin using the New Teacher Evaluation System beginning 2010-2011. The TLU will make preparations and notify teachers, site administrators, and local More at Four contractors and program contacts of this transition and training availability.

Beginning Teacher Support Program (BTSP)

What is the purpose of the Beginning Teacher Support Program (BTSP)?

The BTSP allows teachers to move from a Standard Professional I License (B-K, SP I or Lateral Entry Provisional B-K) to a Standard Professional II License. The BTSP is a three-year program that teachers are required to complete in order to obtain the SP II license. Teachers in the BTSP will be paired with a B-K mentor teacher and an evaluator for a three-year period. The teacher and mentor will have regular contact and document work on mentor/mentee contact logs. In addition, they will develop an Individual Growth Plan (IGP) and monitor the teacher's progress towards meeting the outlined goals. The evaluator will complete three formative evaluations and one summative evaluation annually. Teachers are required to perform "at or above" standard on all five Major Functions on the PKKTPAI Summative Assessment by the end of the third year in order to move to a Standard Professional II License (SP II).

Who does the Beginning Teacher Support Program (BTSP) process serve?

The BTSP serves Initially licensed teachers who have either a B-K Standard Professional I or an Initial Lateral Entry Provisional B-K licensure.

How long does the Beginning Teacher Support Program (BTS) Process take?

The NC State Board of Education (SBE) mandates that teachers are a part of the BTSP for 3 years.

If teachers have been teaching preschool for 5 years without a license, do they still go through the BTSP process for 3 years?

Yes. All initially licensed teachers, regardless of how long they have been teaching, are required to be in the BTSP for 3 years according to NC State Board of Education Policy.

If teachers have been teaching with a B-K SPI license for more than 3 years do they have to stay in the BTSP for 3 years?

Each teacher's experience is different. For example, a teacher who has a B-K SP I license and who has taught for 12 years as a licensed teacher, may be able to complete the BTSP in one year, provided that teacher rates "at or above" standard on all major functions of the PKKTPAI.

Do teachers have to go through the BTSP? Are there any other ways to get a B-K SP II License?

More at Four teachers who work in nonpublic schools must complete the BTSP in order to move from an SP I to an SP II license. There are no alternatives for teachers in a nonpublic school MAF classroom.

What are the training/professional development requirements for teachers in the BTSP?

All initially licensed teachers (BK SP I and Lateral Entry) are required to complete the **Initially Licensed Teacher Pre-Service Checklist**. This checklist is a self-study that includes professional development activities to support teachers new to the licensure process. All other professional development activities (e.g., conduct a guided observation at an OSR demonstration site, develop a system for collecting and using information about the children to plan and teach), must relate to goals set forth in the teacher's Individual Growth Plan (IGP), that are identified as part of the teacher's assessment using the five Major Functions of the PKKTPAI:

- Facilitates Growth, Development & Learning
- Provides a Developmentally Appropriate Learning Environment
- Fosters Self Regulation in Children
- Implements Developmentally Appropriate Assessment Strategies
- Effectively Communicates & Participates Within the Educational Environment

Professional development plans (training activities, trainers) must be prior approved to support a teacher's licensure level. The OSR/TLU accepts plans that have been approved by the NC Division of Child Development and local education agencies (LEA or local public school agencies). All plans, prior approved or not, should be submitted to the TLU via cindy.wheeler@ncmail.net.

How do teachers get credit if they have completed 2 years of the BTSP in the public schools?

In order to receive credit for any amount of time in the BTSP teachers should submit documentation of the BTSP work completed in another system to the TLU. Those documents include: teacher evaluations, IGPs, professional development activities, and mentor/teacher contact logs. If teachers do not have such documents, then the teacher should contact the school and request the system to release the documentation to the teacher or send the documentation directly to the TLU on the teacher's behalf.

Lateral Entry Teacher Program (LETP)

What is the purpose of the Lateral Entry Teacher Program (LETP)?

The LETP allows individuals who hold at least a BA/BS degree and a *lead teacher's* position with the MAF program in the nonpublic schools to become *initially licensed* through the *lateral entry process* until they have completed the requirements (as determined by an Institute of Higher Education-IHE) for their B-K SP I license. The TLU will determine eligibility for a lateral entry license by reviewing an enrolled teacher's transcripts and, if qualified, will request a lateral entry license for these teachers.

Who is served by the Lateral Entry Teacher Program (LETP)?

Teachers with a BA/BS degree in Early Childhood Education (ECE), Child Development (CD) or a related field (human development/family studies or psychology) with an overall GPA of at least 2.5, or teachers with a BA/BS in a non-related field with at least 24 semester hours of coursework in CD/ECE and an overall GPA of at least 2.5.

How long does the lateral entry process take?

The lateral entry process will vary from person to person depending on how many courses are needed to complete a B-K license. Once teachers' lateral entry licenses are issued they have three years to complete the coursework. Teachers can be in the LETP anywhere from 1 year (for those nearly or finished with the coursework) to 3 years (for those just beginning the process).

What happens if a teacher with a lateral entry license does not meet the three-year deadline for completing the required coursework?

If a teacher's lateral entry license expires before all requirements for licensure are met, the teacher is **not** eligible for another lateral entry license. The teacher would be required to enroll in an accredited B-K teacher education program to complete the initial or B-K Standard Professional I license. . **A list of**

accredited BK teacher education programs may be found at www.osr.nc.gov . Click on *Teacher Education and Licensure*, then click on *Information for Teachers*.

When should a teacher get a Plan of Study or Licensure Only Plan?

Teachers should immediately secure a *Plan of Study or Licensure Only Plan* to expedite the licensing process. Once B-K coursework has begun and courses completed, teachers can enroll and begin the licensure process (please refer back to the service priorities in the General TLU Information section).

Where do teachers get a Plan of Study or Licensure Only Plan?

The TLU does not issue *Plans of Study or Licensure Only Plans*. To obtain a *Plan of Study or Licensure Only Plan*, a teacher should contact a college or university with an approved teacher education program. A list of colleges and universities with accredited BK teacher education programs may be downloaded from www.osr.nc.gov under the *Teacher Education and Licensure* link.

How do I get a Plan of Study or Licensure Only Plan through a RALC (Regional Alternative Licensing Center) ?

More at Four teachers are advised to work directly with accredited colleges and universities to obtain a *Plan of Study or Licensure Only Plan*, instead of a RALC. The RALC is designed to work with local education agencies and the Office of School Readiness/Teacher Licensure Unit for teachers who are eligible for lateral entry licensure.

How do I get a Plan of Study or Licensure Only Plan through an IHE (Institutions of Higher Education)?

In order to receive a *Plan of Study or Licensure Only Plan* from an IHE the teacher must submit their transcripts and a copy of their teaching license (if applicable) to an accredited B-K teacher education program from the list posted on the OSR website (see previous response) and a *Plan of Study or Licensure Only Plan* will be developed.

The NC DPI Regional Alternative Licensing Centers (RALC) prefer to receive requests for a Plan of Study from local education agencies, which includes the OSR-Teacher Licensure Unit (TLU). More at Four teachers (in nonpublic schools) are advised to work with the TLU for assistance in securing the appropriate license and Plan of Study.

It is best practice for teachers to keep copies of all correspondence to and from the colleges/universities, the Department of Public Instruction, and the Teacher Licensure Unit.

What are the professional development requirements for the LETP?

All initially licensed teachers (BK SP I and Lateral Entry) are required to complete the **Initially Licensed Teacher Pre-Service Checklist**. This checklist is a self-study that includes professional development activities to support teachers new to the licensure process. All other professional development activities (e.g., conduct a guided observation at an OSR demonstration site, develop a system for collecting and using information about the children to plan and teach), must relate to goals set forth in the teacher's Individual Growth Plan (IGP), that are identified as part of the teacher's assessment using the five Major Functions of the PKKTPAI:

- Facilitates Growth, Development & Learning
- Provides a Developmentally Appropriate Learning Environment
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- Implements Developmentally Appropriate Assessment Strategies
- Effectively Communicates & Participates Within the Educational Environment

Professional development plans (training activities, trainers) must be prior approved to support a teacher's licensure level. The OSR/TLU accepts plans that have been approved by the NC Division of Child Development and local education agencies (LEA or local public school agencies). All plans, prior approved or not, should be submitted to the TLU via cindy.wheeler@ncmail.net.

If I enter the LETP do I still have to complete the BTSP?

Yes. When a teacher enrolls in the LETP participation in the BTSP is automatic. Teachers complete the requirements for lateral entry (LETP) at the same time that they are completing the requirements for the BTSP. Both programs require that the TLU assign a BK licensed mentor and evaluator to support and assess the teacher's professional growth and development. The mentor works in partnership with the teacher to develop the Individual Growth Plan (IGP) based on observations and assessments, which are required by both the LETP and the BTSP.

Does the LETP expedite the attainment of a B-K License?

The LETP allows teachers who have not completed B-K coursework to teach under an Initial Lateral Entry Provisional BK license while finishing their B-K coursework. During this time, up to three years, the teacher can complete the student teaching/internship requirements while remaining in the More at Four classroom with appropriate supports and supervision—the BK mentor and the evaluator.

License Renewal

What is license renewal?

According to NC State Board Education (SBE) mandate teachers are required to renew their teaching license every five years. The More at Four Pre-Kindergarten Program requires teachers to hold and maintain a valid Birth-Kindergarten (BK SP II) License issued by the SBE.

Licensure renewal ensures updating of professional knowledge, practices and technical competencies.

The renewal process is ongoing and comprised of the following:

- ◆ completing a minimum of 150 credits (clock hours)
- or
- ◆ completing a minimum of 15 units (1.0 continuing education unit = 10 clock hours)
- or
- ◆ completing a minimum of 10 semester hours of professional development
- or
- ◆ combination of the above.

Teachers with a B-K SP II License are required to renew their license every five years. Typically teachers will receive credit for a combination of actual teaching and professional development activities, which can be calculated towards renewal. For example, one (1) year of teaching experience = 1.0 CEU (10 clock hours). Teachers with less than a B-K SP II license will follow the procedures prescribed by the LETP or BTSP until they reach the SP II license.

How are teachers with a B-K SP II, Pre-K/K or Preschool Add-on license evaluated?

Teachers' teaching practices, professional development and progress will be monitored and tracked through formal observations and appropriate teacher evaluations during the **five-year** renewal cycle. This applies to teachers who hold the Birth-Kindergarten (B-K) SP II, Pre-K/K or Preschool Add-on license. Teachers with less than a B-K SP II license will follow the evaluation schedule prescribed by the LETP and BTSP process.

Teacher Salary and Benefits

How are teacher salaries determined once they receive a teaching license?

Teachers holding a North Carolina Teaching License (Lateral Entry SPI, B-K SPI, or B-K SPII, Pre-K/K or Preschool Add-on) should be paid based on their experience on the state salary schedule for teachers (as referenced in the More at Four Pre-Kindergarten Program Requirements). Teachers' salaries are determined based on the number of years of experience that is indicated on the teaching license. When applying for a license, teachers should have the experience forms filled out by each of their previous employers. *Form E Verification of K-12 Educator Experience* documents lead teaching experience (including preschool) and teacher assistant experience; *form NE, Verification of Nonteaching Experience*, verifies any preschool experience other than teaching (site administrator, education coordinator, technical assistance provider, etc.). These forms may be obtained through the TLU. Please refer to the More at Four Requirements for salary and benefit requirements.

License

If teachers hold an expired license, what should they do?

Once enrolled with the TLU, contact the TLU licensing specialist Cassandra Silver at Cassandra.Silver@ncmail.net to request a packet to reinstate an expired license.

If teachers hold an out of state license, what should they do?

Contact the TLU licensing specialist at Cassandra.silver@ncmail.net for instructions on how to proceed.

If teachers have a current license in another area, but need to add "preschool" to their license, what forms should be completed and what program is needed?

Teachers with a NC K-6 license may request a "Preschool or Pre-K/K Add-on" to be added to their current license. Teachers with licenses other than a NC K-6 license will request a B-K license. Contact the TLU licensing specialist at Cassandra.Silver@ncmail.net who will determine the appropriate license application and determine if teacher evaluation services are available.

I earned my degree in a foreign country. Am I eligible to receive a teacher's license?

You may be eligible for a teacher's license. After enrolling through the TLU and prior to making application for the license you must submit an **official transcript** from your college or university along

with a course by course report evaluation to the TLU. This type of evaluation provides the following information:

- Lists all subjects completed at the **post-secondary level**
- Provides a U.S. semester credit and grade equivalent for each course
- Provides a U.S. grade point average (GPA) on a 4.0 scale , and
- Designates the level (upper or lower) of each undergraduate course (for applicants who have selected education as their primary purpose)

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction recommends the foreign credentialing agencies listed below:

WORLD EDUCATION SERVICES, INC

PO BOX 5087
BOWLING GREEN STATION
NEW YORK, NY 10274-5087
FAX: 2123-739-6100
PHONE: 212-966-6311
E-MAIL: INFO@WES.ORG
[HTTP://WWW.WES.ORG/](http://WWW.WES.ORG/)

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION EVALUATIONS, INC.

7900 Matthews - Mint Hill Rd., Suite 300
Charlotte, NC 28227
Phone Number: 704-772-0109
Fax Number: 704-545-2484

In addition, you must meet the education requirements listed below:

- BA/BS degree in early childhood, early childhood education, early intervention, and early childhood intervention and early childhood special education, cumulative GPA of at least 2.5
- BA/BS degree in a related field (psychology or family studies), cumulative GPA 2.5 with 24 semester credit hours in early childhood development
- BA/BS degree in an unrelated field; cumulative GPA of at least 2.5 with 24 semester credit hours in early childhood development